

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS: June marks LGBTQIA+ Pride Month and this year commemorates 50 years of Pride in Massachusetts. The first Pride began as a riot at the Stonewall Inn in 1969 and was led by people of color who sought an end to brutality and oppression of the LGBTQIA+ community by the New York Police. 51 years later, we recognize and stand in solidarity with communities of color, particularly Black, Latinx, and Indigenous people who continue to suffer constant injustice. We continue to work toward uniting against oppression, police brutality, racism, transphobia, and many other disparities that disproportionately impact these communities.

WHEREAS: Pride is about challenging authority and embracing solidarity and now, this is more important than ever as people of all races, ethnicities, genders, orientations, and abilities continue to work on many fronts to realize this. Efforts to create a better world through acts of resistance to the inequitable enforcement of unjust laws and local-, state-, and federally-sanctioned harassment and abuse of LGBTQIA+ people, Black people, Latinx people, Asian people, Indigenous people, and women have continued since the second half of the 1960s. 51 years later, we continue to do this work and to seek the same outcomes for all people.

WHEREAS: The continued COVID-19 pandemic is having disproportionate impact on LGBTQIA+ communities and communities of color, which are already vulnerable to health care, employment, and housing discrimination. These communities continue to struggle with higher rates of homelessness, health, and food insecurities compared to other communities. They face additional simultaneous health issues stemming from bias, mental health, and lack of insurance compounded with high job losses and growing rates of positive COVID-19 cases. During COVID-19, we must continue to denounce racist and xenophobic overtones that have pervaded some conversations of the on-going pandemic and its response while bringing awareness and assistance to disproportionately impacted communities.

WHEREAS: Town Meeting created the LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission in 2017 to promote LGBTQIA+-affirming policies for all residents of the town of Arlington; and

WHEREAS: the town of Arlington was one of only 10 municipalities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to earn a spot on the Human Rights Campaign's [2019 Municipal Equality Index](#) and one of seven in the state to earn a perfect score; and

WHEREAS: the LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission is aware that in Massachusetts LGBTQIA+ people of all ages are more likely to experience disparities in health and the social determinants of health as compared with their straight and cisgender peers and that these disparities are even greater among LGBTQIA+ people of color; and

WHEREAS: students in the town of Arlington who are homeless are disproportionately more likely to be LGBTQIA+ and the town of Arlington's 2019 "[Youth Risk Behavior Assessment](#)" found that "[s]exual minority youth including lesbian, gay, and bisexual high school students in particular are at substantial risk for serious health outcomes relative to their peers"; and

WHEREAS: the LGBTQIA+ community in Arlington is resilient and enjoys strong allied partnerships with the town's Human Rights Commission, Council on Aging, Disability Commission, Commission for Arts and Culture, and numerous other groups and residents that support the LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission's

work to bring greater visibility and empowerment to the LGBTQIA+ population through education, advocacy, and collaboration with other Town agencies, schools, and community groups; and

WHEREAS: Celebrating LGBTQIA+ Pride Month and displaying Pride flags are outward representations of the Town's commitment to full inclusion of the LGBTQIA+ community in Arlington's civic life; and

WHEREAS: LGBTQIA+ Pride Month celebrations and commemorations will take place virtually and online in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to adhere to public health physical distancing guidance in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, giving even greater importance to outward representations of support for the LGBTQIA+ community in Arlington.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Members of the Select Board, reaffirm our support for equal protections for LGBTQIA+ residents of Arlington.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we designate June 2020 as LGBTQIA+ Pride Month in Arlington.

A true record.

ATTEST: By: _____ Board Administrator